

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0071] with the following amended paragraph:

[0071] Processing agent 130 is preferably represented on networks 100 and 140 by a network server of the applicable type shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, as will be described further below. However, here again, any network compatible device which is capable of functioning in the described manner could be substituted for the servers shown in FIGS. 4 and 5.

Please replace paragraph [0075] with the following amended paragraph:

[0075] As depicted in FIG. 5, the main unit 1010' ~~server 1000'~~ has a main processor 1100' which is interconnected via bus 1110' with various storage devices including EPROM 1122', RAM 1123', hard drive 1124', which has an associated hard disk 1125', CD drive 1126', which has an associated CD 1127', and floppy drive 1128', which has an associated floppy disk 1129'. The memories, disks and CD all serve as storage media on which computer programming or data can be stored for access by the processor 1100'. The stored data includes one or more databases containing information associated with registered users 120A-120N and transactions associated with registered users 120A-120N. The memories associated with the server hereafter will be collectively referred to as memory 1170. A drive controller 1150' controls the hard drive 1124', CD drive 1126' and floppy drive 1128'. Also depicted in FIG. 5 is a display controller 1120' interconnected to display interface 1121', a keyboard controller 1130' interconnected to keyboard interface 1131' ~~1130'~~, a mouse controller 1140' interconnected to mouse interface 1141' and a modem 1160' interconnected to I/O port 1165', all of which are connected to the bus 1110'. The modem 1160' and interconnected I/O port 1165' are used to transmit and receive signals via the Network 100 as described above. It will be understood that other components may be connected if desired to the bus 1110', including communications components other than a modem. By accessing the stored computer

programming, the processor 1100' is driven to operate in accordance with the present invention.

Please replace paragraph [0100] with the following amended paragraph:

[0100] In this mixed real-time/non-real-time registration processing, steps 1001, 1005, 1010, 1015, 1017, 1020 and 1025 ~~1001-1025~~ of FIG. 10A are performed, described above, in real-time. As in "closed" registration processing, optional steps 1015 and 1017 may or may not be performed. The registering user now has the status of "closed". Subsequent to these steps, and in non-real-time, the processing agent 130 performs at least step 1012 described above and depicted in FIG. 12. Assuming that no risk processing parameters/thresholds are violated, the processing agent 130 changes the user's status in database 700 from "closed" to "open" and notifies the user of the change in status. It should also be understood that any of the operations to register a user, either as "closed" or "open" could be performed as a batch process. That is, some or all of the operations could be performed in non-real-time.

Please replace paragraph [0113] with the following amended paragraph:

[0113] If the processing agent 130 determines that registered user 110A has the status of "open", the payments page could appear as depicted in FIG. 15. The page ~~4500~~ includes, at a minimum, a field for the user to enter an amount of the payment 1501, and a field for the user to enter the identity of the payee 1505. The identity of the payee could be the payee's unique identifier if the payee is a registered user and if the payer knows the payee's unique identifier. The page also includes a "submit" button 1510, after selection of which the processing agent 130 processes the payment directive.